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ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information

Subject: REGULATIONS FOR THE CONTROL AND LIMITATION OF DOCUMENTATION

Addendum

GUIDELINES FOR PUBLISHING IN AN ELECTRONIC FORMAT

Scope and purpose of the guidelines

1. The purpose of the present guidelines is to ensure that documentation disseminated within the United Nations, to Governments, and to the public by electronic media has appropriate legislative mandates and required administrative approvals; meets standards established by the Organization for editorial quality and accuracy; projects a consistent and positive image of the Organization; has clearly defined substantive and public-use objectives; and is timely and easy to use and understand by the intended audience. The guidelines should be read in conjunction with other issuances on the control and limitation of documentation (ST/AI/189 and addenda), where applicable.

2. The guidelines cover documentation, excluding press releases and related public information material, reproduced and disseminated outside the Secretariat by the United Nations in an electronic format (that is, based on digitized or other machine-readable files), using an electronic medium. Electronic media for dissemination may include diskettes, compact disks, magnetic tape and electronic networks. Such documentation includes:

(a) United Nations publications issued under the authorization of the Publications Board, including Official Records, recurrent items, and studies and reports. Recurrent items include periodicals, technical journals and bulletins.

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Studies and reports issued as publications are, for the most part, produced in response to requests from legislative bodies or in implementation of the programme of work of the Secretariat units concerned;

(b) Parliamentary documentation that carries an official United Nations symbol, excluding documents of restricted distribution and informal documents such as conference room papers;

(c) Certain non-symbol papers, when made available to the public, including background and technical papers for seminars and other ad hoc meetings (see paras. 17 and 29 below). They may include technical reports and studies describing significant research findings, working papers and monographs outlining ongoing or completed research in highly specialized fields and technical and substantive project reports. Such papers do not bear an official document symbol but should bear an identifying number;

(d) Newsletters, defined as any information paper, sent out periodically to regular readers to inform them of activities in a given area, whether or not the paper bears the title "newsletter" (see ST/AI/189/Add.19).

Electronic products and services

3. United Nations electronic products and services for public dissemination, except public information materials and parliamentary documentation other than Official Records, should be included in the publications programme, which is administered by the Publications Board. Documents and publications to be disseminated in electronic formats, except public information material such as press releases, should in general meet the same requirements of appropriate legislative mandate and editorial review as are applicable to print format, as contained in the regulations for the control and limitation of documentation (ST/AI/189 and addenda). Electronic products and services should also carry an identification in the form of a United Nations symbol or other established citation record appropriate to the particular category of documentation.

Product development

4. Basic responsibility for the content and preparation of manuscript materials for electronic dissemination, as for print publications and documents, should continue to lie with author departments. In planning electronic publications, author departments should ensure that the product to be prepared is well-defined as to scope and content, has the appropriate legislative mandate, meets a clearly defined user demand and will be disseminated so as to reach its maximum target audience.

5. The publications sales services should be consulted at the initial stage of planning for the publication itself and for its dissemination to the public in electronic format. The sales services will advise on appropriate publishing strategies and, in turn, should have the right of first refusal in electronic distribution of materials previously issued as printed sales publications. A substantial portion of sales and permissions income from electronic products

should be budgeted for funding part of author departments' development costs for electronic materials as part of "cost of goods sold".

6. Technical work for the preparation of electronic products, including programming, keying, conversion and the like, is the responsibility of the author department. Departments should consult with United Nations electronic services, editorial and design services and the Dag Hammarskjöld Library to ensure conformity with organization-wide software, editorial and design standards, among others, including the regulations for the control and limitation of documentation and standards and guidelines for technological innovation, data processing and communication.

7. The preparation of high-quality electronic products requires close interaction and integration of traditional communication, publication and computing skills, which at present are not always available in author departments. The publications and training services will consult with author departments and the technical services support units concerned to prepare an interdisciplinary training programme to enable author departments to upgrade the skills of their staff for the preparation of electronic products.

8. The publications programme will be reviewed periodically by the Publications Board with author departments to identify publications that could be produced and disseminated cost-effectively in electronic format. The prime focus will be to achieve the considerable cost savings possible with electronic publishing technologies. However, it is recognized that, in the case of certain materials, print versions should continue to serve as the copies of record for official purposes, unless the library and editorial services specifically decide otherwise.

9. Electronic products and services should be prepared and produced to the extent possible under the full responsibility and control of author departments. Co-publishing and licensing arrangements may have important advantages in terms of technical and dissemination services not readily available within the Organization. However, author departments may not initiate discussion of contractual arrangements except in consultation with the External Publications Office of the Department of Public Information and the Office of Legal Affairs, which are responsible for such arrangements. Under such arrangements, the United Nations should retain editorial control over the material to be published. Dissemination restrictions should also be as limited as possible, particularly with respect to developing regions and United Nations libraries.

Computer software for preparation of materials in electronic format and for dissemination and retrieval

10. Author departments should consult with the in-house electronic services when planning any electronic publishing activity to ensure that (a) the software used is as compatible as possible with existing software standards and practices in the Organization and with those most prevalent among the target audience and (b) the United Nations has the right to use the software for the purpose intended. Where contractual rights and obligations with software developers and vendors are involved, either directly or through co-publication arrangements,

the Office of Legal Affairs should also be consulted concerning the United Nations right to use and reproduce such software in the preparation and dissemination of electronic publications.

Quality control, evaluation and monitoring

11. Author departments are responsible for ensuring that United Nations materials prepared for dissemination in electronic formats meet the same standards of accuracy, consistency, clarity and conformity to United Nations policy as materials prepared for print reproduction. Where official documentation based on print material is to be issued in electronic formats, the department preparing the electronic format should make provision for appropriate proofreading, to maintain complete consistency between the print and electronic formats. Where, for technical reasons inherent to the electronic format, complete correspondence is not possible, the differences should be explained in documentation accompanying the product or service.

12. Where official materials not previously issued in print form are to be published electronically, the United Nations editorial standards for printed material should be followed. The editorial services should be consulted at an early stage for guidance as well as the United Nations Editorial Manual (ST/DCS/2) where applicable. Standards of accuracy and quality and systematic methods for checking and evaluating the substantive content of materials to be issued should be prepared in each author department and circulated to departmental staff.

13. Departments preparing materials in electronic formats should also ensure that electronic products and services are thoroughly tested ("beta" testing) before they are made available to the public and that user documentation is provided both as part of the electronic product itself and in printed form. Departments should maintain a written record of the testing process and comments received.

14. Departments should establish a regular method of monitoring the value of electronic products and services to users after the materials are disseminated. This post hoc evaluation process should include a public-use e-mail address such as an Internet address for comments, inquiries and technical support. To the extent possible, usage statistics showing accesses and files downloaded should be maintained by in-house electronic services in the case of electronic networks. Electronic materials might also include a short questionnaire addressed to users, including other United Nations agencies and intergovernmental organizations, covering such points as ease of access and use, value of information found, adequacy and value of special programming features such as downloading and printing, use with other software, cross-referencing and indexing.

Referencing and archiving

15. Author departments should cooperate with their local United Nations library to ensure that appropriate records and documentation relating to all United Nations materials issued in electronic formats are maintained by their reference and records services. Copies in both electronic format and print, when available, should be provided to the Dag Hammarskjöld Library for archival purposes and to the Library of the United Nations Office at Geneva and other libraries within the Organization for reference purposes. As electronic files are increasingly accepted as copies of record in the publishing industry and in research and national libraries, considerable economies can be achieved by the Organization and by users of United Nations materials in storage and dissemination costs.

16. In the case of electronic material with multimedia (photo, video, animation and sound) and interactive elements, the various components, whether in print or some other medium, should also be carefully and thoroughly referenced in the materials on-screen and in accompanying documentation for reference and archival purposes.

Unofficial documentation

17. Author departments also prepare informal material, including background and technical papers for seminars and other ad hoc or informal meetings; informal technical working papers and draft technical reports; notes on current departmental activities and related work in the United Nations system; current technical cooperation project information and project technical reports. These materials may be issued and disseminated in electronic formats on the department's own responsibility and should carry a disclaimer stating that the information provided is distributed for information purposes only, is not an official record and does not represent the official views of the United Nations or any of its official bodies or of the Secretary-General. For purposes of identification, every such document in electronic format should bear an identifying number or some other appropriate information for citation, in addition to the name of the author department, and should be identified as a draft if it is subject to further revision. It is the responsibility of author departments, in consultation with editorial services as needed, to ensure that no confidential or restricted documentation is released electronically.

Parliamentary documentation

18. Parliamentary documentation should not be disseminated in any electronic format until it has been officially released pursuant to the provisions of administrative instructions ST/AI/189/Add.3/Rev.2 and ST/AI/341. The secretary of the body concerned must be consulted for permission to disseminate restricted or informal material. No changes may be introduced to the content, presentation or language of the printed document without the approval of the author department and editorial services.

Production

19. Publications processing, procurement and related services associated with print publications should adapt their services to meet the Organization's needs in electronic products and services as well as print publications. Appropriate programming, hardware and software, design, reproduction and distribution facilities should be established for these products and services. A coordination mechanism should be established in cooperation with the technical and author departments concerned to derive maximum advantage in potential savings from standardization of formats and outputs and streamlining of procedures.

Dissemination

20. Electronic products and services should be disseminated by author departments at no charge to United Nations libraries and as working and reference copies for United Nations organizations and national offices that contribute directly to their preparation. Standing address lists should be maintained for these purposes by author departments and distribution services. In the case of electronic products and services offered for sale, a review of the interest and capacity of United Nations information centres, depository libraries, missions and national foreign offices to make effective use of electronic materials will be undertaken by the Publications Board in cooperation with the Technological Innovations Board in order to set an appropriate and cost-effective policy for free or reduced-cost distribution. Free distribution should normally not be undertaken unless offsetting savings can be identified in the cost of reproducing and distributing printed publications.

21. The publications sales services should be consulted at the initial stage of planning the publication itself and its dissemination to the public in electronic format (see also para. 5 above). Author departments may, at their discretion, undertake limited additional free distribution in developing countries of their electronic products and services offered for sale where it can be shown that a specific target audience would not otherwise have access to them. When a substantial demand is foreseen for specific electronic products in developing regions, funding to purchase and distribute the materials at a cost-effective discount should be sought from donor agencies.

Use of photos

22. The Department of Public Information should be consulted regarding the suitability of photographs for reproduction.

23. All photographs published in electronic formats should carry an attribution line either immediately under the photograph or in a consolidated list of photograph attributions prominently displayed and easily referenced in the document. The Department of Public Information should determine whether a photograph should also carry a United Nations copyright notice. Where a published photograph is not the property of the United Nations, the Department of Public Information should confirm the United Nations right to publish the

photograph and ensure each photo is accompanied by an attribution and/or copyright notice agreed with the owner, in consultation as appropriate with the United Nations legal services.

Use of maps

24. Clearance must be obtained from the Cartographic Section of the Department of Public Information prior to the publication of any map under the imprint of the United Nations. The provisions of administrative instruction ST/AI/189/Add.25, "Guidelines for the publication of maps", shall apply to publication and dissemination of maps in electronic formats as well as in printed materials, including the required use of a disclaimer, as set forth in those guidelines and the annex thereto. When maps are taken from non-United Nations sources the author departments shall be responsible for obtaining appropriate permission for reproduction. Each map should be accompanied by an attribution and/or copyright notice.

Copyright and permitted uses

25. In accordance with established copyright policy set forth in administrative instruction ST/AI/189/Add.9/Rev.2 and Rev.2/Add.2, copyright protection should be sought for all United Nations electronically published or disseminated materials, other than parliamentary documentation, public information and such other United Nations materials that, pursuant to established policies, are not subject to copyright protection. As set out in the administrative instruction, a notice of copyright should be displayed at the top or bottom of the preliminary on-screen display of all electronically published documents and other material, in any accompanying documentation related thereto, and, to the extent technically feasible, on each page of any print-outs generated by the program. For "on-screen" displays and print-outs, the notice of copyright should, at a minimum, state the word "copyright", include the symbol "©", include the designation "United Nations", the venue of electronic publication (e.g., the location of the author department or office), the year of electronic publication and a statement that all rights are reserved, such as follows: "Copyright © [year] United Nations, New York [or other place of original electronic publication] - All rights reserved". Author departments should arrange to send the requisite number of copies of a publication in electronic format, including accompanying software and any operating or instructional manuals, to the Office of Conference and Support Services for appropriate copyright registration.

26. A notice of copyright may include a statement of permitted uses. In addition to such uses of copyrighted materials which, pursuant to applicable international or domestic law, are considered to be fair uses, author departments, with the approval of the Publications Board, may specify permitted uses for copyrighted materials published or otherwise disseminated electronically, including such permitted uses as the non-commercial use of such information for educational, scientific, news-reporting or other public informational purposes. Author departments should forward draft statements of permitted uses for their materials in electronic formats to the Publications

Board for review in consultation with the Office of Legal Affairs, as appropriate, with regard to such statements of permitted uses.

27. In cases in which electronically published or disseminated documents or other materials incorporate software and electronic formatting prepared or otherwise licensed by the United Nations, such materials should be distributed with a license agreement prepared with the appropriate legal services. A sample agreement is contained in the annex to the present document.

Use of the United Nations emblem

28. The use of the United Nations emblem in electronically published documents, materials, products and services should comply with the principles set out in administrative instruction ST/AI/189/Add.21 for the use of the United Nations emblem in documents and publications. The United Nations emblem should not be used in connection with the dissemination of unofficial documentation or by vendors or co-publishers of United Nations materials, except with the express authorization of the Publications Board. Wherever the emblem is used in electronically published or disseminated materials, the following notice should appear together with and, to the fullest extent possible, should be linked graphically with the emblem of the United Nations: "In accordance with applicable international and domestic law, any display, transmission, reproduction or any other use of the United Nations emblem, the name of the United Nations or any abbreviation thereof, is strictly reserved for the United Nations and its affiliated organs and bodies. The United Nations emblem may not be copied, reproduced, retransmitted or otherwise used by any public or private organization or individual without the express written permission of the United Nations. Any person wishing to seek permission for the use of the emblem or name of the United Nations should contact the Executive Secretary, United Nations Publications Board, Department of Public Information, United Nations, New York, New York 10017".

Use of networks to disseminate information

29. The development and use of electronic information networks should be encouraged as a means of cost-effectively providing greater information about the Organization and its activities to a broader audience and of promoting greater awareness of and participation in the work of the Organization. To the greatest extent possible, United Nations information resources on public-access electronic networks should be so organized that Member States, United Nations offices, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations worldwide all have cost-effective access. In the case of popular public-access networks such as the Internet Gopher and World Wide Web, the primary access point for all United Nations services worldwide should be the current United Nations address, "un.org" in the case of Internet, to the extent technically feasible. The organization and design of the primary access United Nations "home page" on a network is the responsibility of the Department of Public Information, in consultation with author departments, so as to ensure the effective placement and integration of United Nations information resources on the network.

30. Arrangements to provide United Nations information resources to outside services for redissemination must be undertaken on a contractual and non-exclusive basis. Where outside services request to be provided with information resources on a regular basis for redissemination electronically, including any information resources that may already be considered to be in the public domain, an appropriate non-exclusive payment or royalty should be negotiated for purposes of cost-recovery.

Policy review

31. Given the rapid evolution of electronic publishing and dissemination technologies worldwide, the Publications Board will review experience in implementing the present guidelines on a regular basis with a view to determining whether the guidelines need to be supplemented or amended so as to keep abreast of and conform with evolving electronic publishing challenges, standards and opportunities. The review will focus on further steps to ensure (a) widest possible cost-effective access to and utilization of United Nations information resources, (b) effective utilization of the full potential of new technologies for cost savings and cost-recovery, (c) access by Member States to electronic products and services at no charge and (d) implementation of quality control and evaluation mechanisms.

Annex

FORM OF USER LICENSE AGREEMENT FOR ELECTRONICALLY PUBLISHED WORKS

The following is the form of user license agreement for electronically published works. In case of any doubts concerning whether the form of user license agreement is appropriate, author departments should confer with the Office of Legal Affairs.

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